

We claim:

1. A method of timing an attempt to establish a connection path between a first and second node in a communications network, said method comprising initiating said attempt to establish a connection path after a period of time has elapsed wherein said period of time is greater than another period of time which had previously elapsed between two previous attempts, if any, to establish said connection.
2. The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said period of time is greater than said another period of time by a fixed time value.
3. The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said period of time does not exceed a maximum time value.
4. The method as claimed in claim 1 wherein said connection path is a soft permanent label switched path.
5. The method as claimed in claim 2 wherein said fixed time value is ten seconds.
6. A method of timing attempts to establish connections for a plurality of requests for connections in a communication network, said method comprising:
  - having a timer arrangement tracking passage of a regular interval of time;
  - having a list of records relating said plurality of requests for connections;
  - selecting one record from said list;
  - attempting to establish a connection relating to said one record; and
  - if said connection relating to said one record is established, then
    - marking said one record as being successful, otherwise, re-attempting to establish said connection at successive intervals increasing by said regular interval.

7. The method as claimed in claim 6 wherein said selecting one record from said list comprises:

having a time field in said list of records;

on each said regular interval of time for each entry in said list of records:

decrementing a time value in said time field; and

if said time value is zero for an entry is zero, then

selecting said entry as said one record.

8. The method as claimed in claim 6, wherein when re-attempting to establish said connection at successive time intervals, said successive time intervals do not exceed a maximum time value

9. The method as claimed in claim 8 wherein said maximum time value is sixty seconds.

10. In a communications network comprising two nodes having at least two communications links associated between said two nodes, a method of selecting one of said at least two communications links for signalling between said two nodes utilizing a round-robin algorithm.

11. The method as claimed in claim 10 wherein said method further comprises not selecting any communications link of said at least two communications links having insufficient resources for communications between said two nodes or having a failure therein.